:Beaglehole and Beaglehole E-5 (1934-5)1938 Pukapukans

821 by the events narrated in the story of Lingutaimoa and her pet *manini* fish (1).

Seasons

821 The native Pukapukan year was divided into seasons (*vaia*). The sign
805 for the new year was the morning rising of the Pleiades, about the middle
132 of May. This ushered in a period of six moons of pleasuring, *ono maina*
221 *utuutu* (*utuutu* is a jumping game, and presumably the word is a symbol of good feelings engendered by sporting contests). Some informants dated this period from the rising of the Pleiades, others from the first new moon after the rising. Hence it comes between the May-June and October-November moons. The cool trade winds blow steadily from the southeast, deep-sea fish are plentiful, and the sea outside the reef in the lee of the atoll is always calm enough to render it possible to catch these fish. This season, though marked at times by a shortage of talo, is usually well provided with fish and nuts. It is the time for competitive sports, for deep-sea voyages, and for well-being. The period is introduced by feasting and dancing.

The six pleasure months are followed by six tapu moons (*ono maina yu*) from November to April. It is a period of heavy and changeable winds, possible hurricanes, excessive heat, and sultry weather. Deep-sea fish are not plentiful, and heavy seas sometimes make fishing arduous. Food comes from reef fishing and beach fishing for smaller fish. The supply of talo is plentiful if there has been no destruction of tubers during the preceding season. There was formerly little dancing, feasting, or chanting during this period, except at deaths. Compared with the moons of pleasure, these moons mark a time of stagnation of group activities, when only routine matters are kept in hand.

Another native classification gives three seasons, cutting across the dual division. The rainy season (*te vaia yua*), lasting from November to March, starts when the wind swings round from the south to the northwest and wild ducks are sighted flying southward. At this time the people of Yato village repair their houses and reroof them, because this village bears the brunt of the winds from the north and west. It is a season for good growth of trees, nuts, and talo; fishing is bad, but turtles come onto the outer beaches at the beginning of the period. The marine worm (*palolo*) is not known in Pukapuka so there is no *palolo* season to usher in this period. The season for fair weather (*te vaia lelei*) lasts from March to June when fishing is good and there is still much rain and plenty of food. The season of scarcity
221 (*te vaia to te onge*) lasts from July to October. There is little rain, the talo turns yellow and does not produce tubers in any abundance. Growth of coco-
312 nuts is marked by a midwinter pause; though not plentiful, they are generally sufficient for the needs of the population. Deep-sea fishing is good but water

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221 [312] and talo are scarce. At the present time, the island water supply from concrete cisterns is rationed out to the families of the island from July until the first heavy rains.

The seasonal changes, though important for living conditions, have not involved any great seasonal rhythm of labor. Whereas house repairing for the western village is in October and November, that for the eastern village is in April and May, when the steady winds blow from the south and east. There is a tendency to reserve activities centered round the building of new houses and canoes for the cooler midyear months, and at the beginning of this period there is a spurt of building in all villages. Other activities go on throughout the year. Twice each year, depending on the maturity of the plants, all the talo beds on Wale and Motu Ko are fertilized. With the arrival of May and the beginning of the best deep-sea fishing, there is a general repairing of the fishing gear, including canoes, paddles, hooks, fishline, and anchor line. Today there is seasonal activity in copra making, the people from each village going to their respective reserves from March to April, and a second time from August to September.

Water

312 315 Water for domestic use was formerly obtained exclusively from seep holes and wells sunk close to the beach above high tide level. This slightly brackish water is still used for bathing and other purposes by all three villages when they visit their reserves and, owing to the distant location of a better supply, by most Yato villagers all the time. Today three concrete cisterns on Wale store water draining from the church and courthouse roofs. This water is used for drinking and washing in the rainy season, in the dry season for drinking only.

Plant Life

134 241 137 The soil of the whole atoll is poor, mostly infertile sand and coral gravel, and in consequence vegetation is sparse. Tropical bush grows luxuriantly in a few sections. Of the food plants, coconuts grow well, but talo and bananas grow only in excavated pits that have been filled with plant material and must be fertilized with leaves and ferns twice each year. As an aid to growth of bananas, old pieces of iron are buried among the roots. A few papaya and limes grow on Motu Kotawa. The kava plant (*Piper methysticum*) does not grow on the atoll. Specimens of all plants growing in Pukapuka, as identified by Marie C. Neal, E. H. Bryan, Jr., and F. Raymond Fosberg, are recorded in the following list:

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One jealous woman is reputed to accompany her husband everywhere he goes, even going fishing with him. She is the butt of much private ridicule. A man in Ngake suffers from paralysis of the leg and is unable to carry out men's occupations. As his wife is bedridden, he devotes much time to preparing his own talo foods. This is no matter for ridicule; the village has pity for his misfortunes and rather admires the way he shoulders the burdens of running the household.

The heavy work of talo bed excavation was probably always joint labor. In Yato and Loto villages, little excavation is done at the present time. Ngake men labor strenuously with the women at enlarging the village and private talo beds on Motu Ko. In former times, when closely allied with priestly possession, the practice of medicine was almost exclusively a male occupation. Women practice medicine a little today, based on a limited knowledge of some herbal remedies for use in childbirth, inflammation, and the like.

Division of labor on the basis of age applies mainly to the very young and the very old. The participation of children in adult activities is slight, and follows in general the lines of adult sex division. A child's participation increases as he approaches adulthood. The only boy noticed who regularly helped with the domestic tasks of talo preparation had a mother with no female relatives to help her in the care of numerous small children. The tasks expected of an old man or woman are light. Most old people continue to putter with trivial tasks as if loth to feel that their days of active employment are over. The very feeble are cared for by children and relatives.

The amount of specialization in Pukapukan economic life is small. Every man considers himself able to perform adequately most adult male duties, and every woman considers herself a good enough cook or mat plaiter. Specialists (*tangata matua*) were limited to such occupations as canoe building, the practice of medicine, and priestly duties; they received recompense for their special abilities either in gifts or in added social prestige. All specialists save the priest participated in the daily routine of economic activities. Minor specialization occurs where one man in a group of relatives is recognized as being especially skilled in the making of sennit, or the lashing of house frames; when the kinship group is working on a joint project, work is allotted to those best able to complete it. Specialization depends on natural skill and training, not on inheritance or purchase.

Economic Routine

Seasonal variation of work is very slight; deep-sea fishing is poor during the hurricane season, and not engaged in by the men as frequently as it is during the colder season; talo beds are fertilized about twice a year, depending more on the growth of the talo than on the season. There may be slightly less activity during the rainy months.

2:Macgregor E-2 (1933) 1935 Pukapukans

In order to prevent theft or any unfair proportioning of the taro and coconut crops, a rigid tapu excludes everyone from entering a *motu* without permission from the village council. Loto erected a watchman's house on the embankment of the main part of the communal taro pit and walls of coral slabs (pl. 3) to insure the protection of its taro supply behind the village.

When it is time to gather food the entire population moves away from the village. During the harvesting period each section lives on its own *motu,* where it has a small settlement of houses. Harvesting that includes the cutting and drying of coconuts for copra requires a longer period of residence at the *motu* settlements than the ancient harvesting periods and it is necessary for the women and children to accompany the men and settle away from the village for several weeks. Formerly the women and children were forbidden to go into the *motu* and the men did all the harvesting as the need for food arose. Today while the main population is away a few old people and children remain in each village section to guard the houses and property left behind. None of the others are allowed to return to the village during the harvesting period. Our visit to Pukapuka during the harvesting period brought the people back to the village, for a ship is an unusual circumstance. Yet each night they returned to their own plantation quarters.

Motu Kotava Islet has one plantation village, Aonga, which consists of a cluster of small huts in the middle of its north shore. A path running southward from the village divides the island. The land at the eastern point of the islet is Puipui; the middle division is Oloavalu, and the western division, Kokoakanava. The western point extending out to the southern reef is Te Auma. Uluniu and Alitaiva are two pieces of land along the southern beach.

Motu Koe Islet has its plantation village, Te A or Te Aa, in the heart of the bay on the lagoon shore. The houses are in two groups. At one time there were settlements of the immigrant Eaki people located at each end of the islet. These people dug the large taro pits which are used by the present Pukapukans. Smaller pits have been dug by the present people also. This islet has several ancient, pre-Christian graves, where Pukapuka chiefs, killed in fights against the Motu Koe people, were buried.